Situated on Wadawurrung land

ADDRESS:
18 Price Street Torquay

EMAIL:
tdhsociety@bigpond.com

FACEBOOK:
Torquay Historical Society

WEBSITE:
https://torquayhistoricalsociety.com.au/

VICTORIAN COLLECTIONS
https://victoriancollections.net.au/organisations/torquay-district-historical-society

CONTACT:
President: Frank Vagg
0400 877 035
Secretary: Carollyn Williams
0400 911 664

OPEN:
Thursdays 1pm to 4pm
OR by appointment

MEETINGS:
Committee:
Quarterly Feb, May, Aug, Nov
Archive group:
Thursday at 1pm
AGM is in August

TORQUAY & DISTRICT HISTORICAL SOCIETY Inc

NEWSLETTER – AUGUST 2026

NEWS

The **Annual General Meeting** of the Torquay & District Historical Society will be held on **Thursday 27 August at 1pm** at History House 18 Price St Torquay.

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TDHS is participating in the **IGA Rewards Program** July to November. This is a major fund raiser for the society. When you shop there please collect the tokens to place in our chute.

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Mike McLean Torquay artist has donated a set of Willy Wagtails plaques for our fence. Mike's hand-crafted **Willy Wagtails** have become a beloved fixture outside homes across Torquay and beyond, spreading to over 30 countries worldwide. Mike is a painter, a teacher, and a storyteller through art. His canvas portraits and broader works carry the same warmth and human connection that have made his wagtails so universally loved. Each piece reflects a practice built over years of dedication, community, and a genuine love for the creative process.
You can **follow Mike on Instagram**: @mikemcleanartist

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A possible relic of the ***Victoria Tower*** wrecked off Bream Creek in 1869 has been temporaily uncovered at Whites Beach due to the movement of the high tides. We have communicated with **Heritage Victoria** and their maritime archaeologists who have confirmed and recorded it. The Heritage Act 2017 and Commonwealth Underwater Cultural Heritage Act 2018 provide protection for all historic vessels and material from those vessels. Penalties apply for damaging or taking material.

Shipwreck material exposed across Victoria's beaches

TORQUAY LIONS CLUB

Did you know the Torquay Lions Club commenced in 1969 with **inaugural President John Guilfoyle** who served for 2 years. The **first female President was Esther Rosewell** in 2010. Their main activities are fund raising for the club and charities, supporting the community and facilitating youth programs. Community support includes maintaining the analemmatic sundial, Bellbrae Cemetery maintenance, transporting food trays for Feed Me Surf Coast, hosting the ANZAC day gunfire breakfast, serving on the Committee of Management of the Torquay Lions Retirement Village and working bees to help people in need. Youth programs include sponsoring local children to go on holiday at Camp Licola, Youth of the Year Awards for senior secondary school students, Torquay Schools Scholarships and funding the Youth Pod a relocatable drop-in centre for the Shire's young people. Another remarkable activity is to gather early on New Years Day on the foreshore to clean away the rubbish from the previous night's celebrations and make the foreshore safe again for the public. The much-loved **Lions Children's Train** is a fund raiser for the Club and operates at the Cowrie Markets, school fetes and private functions around Torquay. A living history of community service.

Source: https://torquaylionsclub.org.au/

Source: https://torquaylionsclub.org.au/page-10/

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THE CHANGING FACE OF GILBERT STREET

Gilbert Street is changing again! TDHS are collecting photos of Gilbert Street shops and houses that have disappeared. If you can add to the collection please email your photos. An exhibit is being planned for **History Week in October**

Gail & Harvey Price's store in the 1980's

Source: Price Collection

TORQUAY SPEEDWAY

The Torquay Speedway operated from 1962 to 1974 on a ¼ mile (400 + m) oval speedway running stock care, hot rods and occasionally TQs (midget speed cars). The track was built by the Geelong Hot Rod Club and the Torquay Football Club. The track was rough and its life was short.

It was known as the dust bowl and women's races were included.

My Mum drove hot rods on the Torquay track. She would tell the story of smashing into the side wall and looking up and seeing her three kids with horrified looks on our faces looking down at her (L. M. Matthews).

Some names associated with racing at Torquay are Wayne Johnson, Ray Welsh, Kelvin Gray, Ray Atkinson, Tommy Rainstorm, Daryl Madex, Daryl Napper, Billy & John McCarthy, Geoff Reynolds, Andrew Thompson, Charlie Waugh and Ian Drew

Raced at Torquay in modified sedans first with a Humpy Holden, then an FC Holden and my final car was an XW Falcon which had been a test car from Fords. I worked at Product Engineering and was able to get the Falcon as an employee. Ran during the 1960's and early 1970's (Tim Tyler)

Photos & comments:
Submitted to TDHS Facebook by drivers including Wayne Johnson

RESOURCES AT WEBSITE

- Library catalogue
- Membership forms
- Research request forms
- Walking trail brochure
- Back issues of the newsletter
- History of Torquay HS

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Photos
TDHS Pettigrove Collection

Next newsletter
Nov 2026

ANNUAL HIGH TIDE FESTIVAL
REMEMBER THE YEARS?

The parade travelled along the foreshore still with the **cypress pines** that were later removed to better allow the grass to grow on the foreshore.

Badminton Club in **Pepi** of the **Torquay Electrical Service.**

Is this the **Dove Crew** from the TSLSC?

Is this **Wilma Pettigrove** with school children?